

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MC-02 ACDA-10

IO-10 SAM-01 SAB-01 EA-10 EUR-12 NIC-01 /096 W

----- 033509

R 141200Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6922

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 2165

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,IN,US,PK

SUBJECT: PRESS CRITICISM OF REPORTED U.S. ARMS SALES TO
PAKISTAN CONTINUES

BEGIN SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER GANDHI'S INTERVIEW TO THE
NEW YORK TIMES DOMINATED THE DELHI ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS
ON FRIDAY MORNING. THERE WAS EXTENSIVE RADIO AND TELEVISION NEWS
COVERAGE ON THURSDAY NIGHT. CRITICAL COMMENTS ON THE REPORTED
U.S. DECISION TO LIFT THE ARMS EMBARGO TO PAKISTAN CONTINUED.
END SUMMARY.

1. NEWSPAPERS PROMINENTLY FRONT-PAGED LENGTHY ACCOUNTS OF THE
PRIME MINISTER'S NEW YORK TIMES INTERVIEW. HEADLINES UNDERScored
THAT ARMING OF PAKISTAN WILL STRAIN INDO-U.S. TIES. THE CONGRESS
PARTY-ORIENTED NATIONAL HERALD RAN A TYPICAL HEADLINE: "PAK ARMS
DEAL WILL HARM INDO-U.S. TIES: PM."

2. CREDITED TO THE PRESS TRUST OF INDIA AND THE UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
DISPATCHES, THE NEWS ACCOUNTS STRESSED IN THE LEAD THAT THE PRIME
MINISTER HAS SAID THE U.S. DECISION WOULD MAKE THE TASK OF IMPROVING
INDO-U.S. RELATIONS "MOST DIFFICULT" BECAUSE "THESE ARMS HAVE AL-
WAYS BEEN USED AGAINST INDIA, NOT ONE BUT SEVERAL TIMES."

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. NEWSPAPERS QUOTED MRS. GANDHI'S REMARKS THAT PEOPLE FELT VERY

STRONGLY ABOUT THESE MATTERS, ADDING THAT INDIA AND THE U.S.
"SHOULD TRY AND FIND WHATEVER AREA OF FRIENDSHIP OR COOPERATION
THERE CAN BE, AND ENHANCE IT."

4. COMMENTING ON DEMOCRACY IN THE U.S., THE PRIME MINISTER WAS
CITED SAYING: "WLL, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT IN YOUR ADMINISTRATION
THERE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH UNDRSTANDING OF INDIA. I DON'T THINK
DEMOCRACY COMES INTO IT. IF YOU SEE AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP WITH
OTHER COUNTRIES, DEMOCRACY HAS NOT REALLY COME INTO THE PICTURE AT
ALL."

5. NEWS ACCOUNTS ALSO NOTED MRS. GANDHI'S COMMENTS THAT AMBASSAOR
MOYNIHAN " MADE A VERY GENUINE EFFORT" AND HE DID "ACHIEVE
A CERTAIN BREAKTHROUGH" AND QUOTED HER STATEMENT THAT AMBASSADOR
SAXBE "WILL BE WELCOME AND WE WISH HIM SUCCESS IN TRYING TO FORGE
A BETTER RELATIONSHIP."

6. REPORTAGE INCLUD THE PRIME MINISTER'S ON INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS
("HAVEN'T THEY STOOD BY US WHENEVER WE HAVE NEEDED ANY HELP?").
INDIA'S "STRONG SUPPORT" FOR THE ARAB CAUSE AS AGAINST ISRAEL,
THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE WESTERN COUNTRIES AND THE OIL-PRODUCING
ARAB NATIONS, AND QUESTIONS ON THE DOMESTIC SITUATION IN INDIA.

7. IN A COMMENTARY ON THE STATE-RUN ALL INDIA RADIO, "POLITICAL
COMMENTATOR" COL. C. RAMA RAO DECLARED THAT PAKISTAN HAS "ENOUGH
ARMS TO MEET HER LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS" AND RESUMPTION OF
U.S. ARMS SUPPLY WILL "ALMOST CERTAINLY ENCOURAGE EXTREME ELEMENTS
IN THAT COUNTRY TO ADVENTUROUS ACTION AGAINST HER NEIGHBORS." HE
CONCLUDED HIS TALK BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT WASHINGTON WILL
RECONSIDER ITS DECISION AND "RECOGNIZE THAT RESUMPTION OF THE ARMS
SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN WOULD ONLY PROMOTE TENSION IN THE REGION AND
WOULD IN NO WAY FURTHER AMERICA'S OWN INTERESTS."

8. THE COMMUNIST DAILY PATRIOT EDIT-PAGED A LENGTHY BYLINER,
"LOGIC OF BHUTTO'S SELL-OUT TO AMERICA," BY DEWAN BERINDRANATH,
SPECIALIST IN PAKISTAN AFFAIRS. THE THRUST OF HIS PEECE WAS
THAT THE REPORTED U.S. DECISION IS "INTIMATELY LINKED WITH THE
INTERNAL SITUATION" IN PAKISTAN: "PLAYING UPON AMERICAN FEARS,
MR. BHUTTO HAS BEEN PLUGGING THE LINE THAT HE FACES A MAJOR
DANGER FROM THE SO-CALLED 'PRO-SOVIET AND THE PRO-INDIAN NATIONAL
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AWAMI PARTY (NAP) ELEMENTS.' HIS VIEW IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY
SHARED BY TEHERAN. THE NAP MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN BANNED IN ORDER
TO SHOW THE U.S. THAT PAKISTAN IS INDEED AS LOYAL A FRIEND AND
ALLY AS THE U.S. COULD HOPE TO GET ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ARMS, ANTIAMERICAN FEELING, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NEWDE02165
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750055-0596
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750242/aaaablcy.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <15 JAN 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: T: PRESS CRITICISM OF REPORTED U.S. ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN CONTINUES
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, PK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006